

# THE HISTORY OF BANK OF CHINA: A Critic on the Documentation and Research<sup>1</sup>

## I. INTRODUCTION

The Bank of China (hereafter, BOC) celebrated its hundred-year anniversary in 2012. Following the Chinese tradition, the BOC compiled its anniversary history. However, as shown in this paper, the BOC anniversary history is not equal to real histories in terms of their objectives and contents.

As an academic discipline, bank history first appeared in Europe, United States, and Japan. But this kind of study did not develop in China until the last twenty years. Due to the rapid growth of Chinese economy, the history of Chinese banking has attracted great attention around the world. Scholars are curious to know how Chinese banks have financed the expanding Chinese industries. It is no doubt that the position of the BOC in the world economy is changing due to its rapid expansion and internationalization. Currently, the BOC is one of the biggest banks in the world. However, the research on the BOC's history lags behind its world status.

This paper will discuss firstly, the formation of the concept and ways of interpretation of the BOC's history, and secondly, provide a detailed review of the literature of the subject, which is based on the BOC's ar-

chives, publications of its history, or collection of its materials. This paper will show how the bank's publications varied according to the time of their completion. This paper will also show since the quality of the current research is relatively lower, developing a methodology for the study would be a critical step toward developing the current research. More importantly, because the current literature on China's banking industry is seldom based on the historical materials compiled by the BOC, scholars need to find ways to use the BOC's archives.

## II. THE LIMITS OF THE ANNIVERSARY BOOKS

It is commonly known that writing history of a company is a conventional practice.<sup>2</sup> According to recent studies, there are about 13,000 volumes of Japanese company history (called as *shashi* 社史 in Japanese) produced from the Meiji period to the year 2002 [Murahashi 2002:1]. Compared with Japan, China is far behind by having only 1,200 volumes.<sup>3</sup> Nevertheless, as one of the most prominent banks in China, the BOC has been regarded as the most aggressive bank producing books to narrate its own history.

Altogether there are five types of history writings produced by the BOC: 1. official history (*zhenghangshi* 正行史); 2. collection of materials and gazetteers (*hangshi ziliao* 行史資料/ *hangzhi* 行志); 3. pictorials (*hangshi tuce* 行史圖冊); 4. concise history and its English translation (*jianshi* 簡史/ *fanyiben* 翻譯本); and 5. anniversary issues (*zhounian jiniance* 周年紀念冊). As shown in Table 1, most of the BOC's history publications are concerned with bank activities at local level. Due to the fact that the BOC has a large number of branches and sub-branches, this table only reflects a small part of the whole picture. Furthermore, the purpose of the anniversary issues is advertising rather than academic, and most of the articles included are not academic. So, these publications cannot be counted as "professional historical accounts." These publications included: *Bank of China Hong Kong Branch 75 Years in Hong Kong* (中國銀行香港分行七十五周年紀念) [Zhongguo Yinhang Xianggang... 1992]; *Bank of China Yantai Branch, 1913–93* (中國銀行煙台分行 1913–1993) [Zhongguo Yinhang Yantai... 1993]; *Bank of China: Chongqing Branch, 1915–95* (中國銀行：重慶市分行, 1915–1995) [Zhongguo Yinhang Chongqingshi... 1995]; *BOC Hong Kong Branch: Serving Hong Kong for Eighty Years, 1917–97* (中國銀行香港分行：服務香港八十年, 1917–1997) [Zhongguo Yinhang Xianggang... 1997]; *Twentieth Anniversary of BOC Shenyang Branch* (中國銀行瀋陽分行二十周年紀念冊) [Zhongguo Yinhang Shenyang... 2001];

*A Glance of BOC History: In Commemoration of Ninety Years of BOC* (行史掠影：慶祝中國銀行成立九十周年) [Jin Shengchao 2002]. What further delimits the academic value of these publications is that these publications are circulated only in limited channels as different with the ones published openly.

**Table 1: Publications on BOC History in the Last Eighty Years**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Title</b>
1931	<i>Chronology of BOC</i> (中國銀行大事記) [Zhongguo Yinhang 1931]
1986	<i>History of BOC's Jinan Branch</i> (濟南中國銀行史) [Zhongguo Yinhang Jinan... 1986]
1989	<i>BOC in Beijing</i> (北京的中國銀行, 1914–1949年) [Zhongguo Yinhang... and Beijinghi Dang'anguan 1989]
1991	<i>History of BOC's Shanghai Branch, 1912–1949</i> (中國銀行上海分行史, 1912–1949年) [Zhongguo Yinhang Shanghai Guoji... 1991]
1992	<i>BOC, 1912–1992: In Commemoration of the 80th Anniversary (pictoral)</i> (中國銀行, 1912–1992: 紀念中國銀行成立八十周年(圖冊)) [Zhang G. 1992]
	<i>BOC's Gansu History</i> (甘肅中國銀行史) [Cui 1992]
	<i>History of BOC's Hankou Branch, 1913–1949</i> (中國銀行漢口分行史, 1913–1949) [Yu G. 1992]
1995	<i>15 Years of BOC's Guangzhou Branch</i> (中國銀行廣州市分行十五年, 1979–1993) [Zhongguo Yinhang Guangzhoushi... 1995]
	<i>History of BOC, 1912–1949</i> (中國銀行行史, 1912–1949年) [Zhongguo Yinhang Hangshi... 1995]
1997	<i>A Concise Version of BOC History, 1912–1949</i> (中國銀行行史簡本, 1912–1949年) [Zhongguo Yinhang Hangshi... 1997]
1999	<i>A History of the Bank of China, 1912–1949</i> (condensed edition)* [Editorial Committee on the History of the Bank of China 1999]
2001	<i>History of BOC, 1949–1992</i> (中國銀行行史, 1949–1992) [Zhongguo Yinhang Hangshi... 2001]
2005	<i>History of BOC's Yuncheng Branch</i> (中國銀行運城分行行史) [Zhongguo Yinhang Yuncheng...2005]
2006	<i>The Organization History of BOC's Shangdong Province Branch, 1949–2005</i> (中國銀行股份有限公司山東省分行組織史, 1949–2005) [Zhongguo Yinhang Gufen... 2006]
2007	<i>History of BOC's Hunan Province Branch, 1915–1996</i> (中國銀行湖南省分行史, 1915–1996) [Zhongguo Yinhang Hunansheng... 2007]

2008	<i>History of BOC's Yunnan Province Branch, 1938–2007</i> (中國銀行雲南省分行行史, 1938–2007) [Zhongguo Yinhang Yunnan-sheng... 2008] <i>Centenary Vicissitudes</i> (百年春秋) [“Bainian Chunqiu”... 2008]
2009	<i>History of BOC's Hebei Province Branch, 1976–2004</i> (中國銀行河北省分行行史, 1976–2004) [Zhang Z. 2009]
2010	<i>History of BOC's Henan Province Branch, 1913–2010</i> (中國銀行河南省分行行史, 1913–2010) [Zhongguo Yinhang Henan-sheng... 2010]
2012	<i>Memory for 100 Years and History for 100 Years</i> (百年記憶·百年史話 1912–2012) [Zhongguo Yinhang Jjiangsusheng... 2012]

\* The so-called “condensed version” will be difficult for English readers due to the low quality of translation.

### III. THE VALUE OF STANDARD OF BANK'S HISTORY

It is interesting to ask who is qualified to write the history of BOC. What are the merits or demerits for the BOC to write its own history? Before answering these questions, it is worth remembering that the earliest account of the BOC history was published in the early 1930s. In order to promote the corporate identity and to preserve the archives of the bank itself, some Chinese banks (including the BOC) compiled their history books. For example, in 1931, the BOC produced its chronology entitled *Zhongguo yinhang dashiji* 中國銀行大事記, which covered all the important events of the period 1911–1931 [Zhongguo Yinhang 1931; Jin and Fan 1997]. Three years later in 1934, the Bank of Communications (交通銀行) compiled a volume of its commemorative issue of the opening of its Guangzhou and Hong Kong Branch [Jiaotong Yinhang 1934]. In 1937, in order to celebrate its twentieth anniversary, the Kincheng Bank (金城銀行) compiled the twentieth anniversary issue [Jincheng Yinhang 1937]. So, there had been a tradition for Chinese banks to write their own histories.

One may ask what was the standard for writing an official history of the BOC. And what impact would it make? One way to answer the question is looking at the items listed in Table 1 which were all done by the BOC's related parties. They were either former staff or retired middle-rank officials, who had long years of serving the bank.<sup>4</sup> If we looked at the positive side, writing the BOC history by the BOC employees does make sense for protecting the bank's inside stories. However, when look-

ing from the opposite angle, the practice elicits a lot of controversial issues such as conflict of interest and not objective. The reason is that the BOC staff is not trained to write history. Thus, the former Hong Kong and Shanghai Banking Corporation (hereafter, HSBC) archivist Edwin Green [1995] is right when he suggests letting professionals who has no relations with the HSBC to write the history of the bank. A good example of this arrangement is the modern Chinese economic historian Frank H. H. King who was commissioned by the HSBC to produce a series of four volumes of HSBC history. These books were published by the Cambridge University Press from 1987 to 1991 [King 1987–91].<sup>5</sup>

Bu Ming, who has been the BOC's CEO declared in his personal recollection (八十紀行) how he wrote a history of the BOC after he retired. He wrote:

The first question in writing the BOC's history is to periodize the eight-four years of history of the BOC. Then we can proceed to compile and teach the subject. Due to the fact that the BOC is not a national bank, its development has been restrained by the following three factors: 1) the changes of political regimes and the transformation or implementation of important policies; 2) the drastic changes of internal or external environment, for example, revolution and war; 3) the transformation of capitalization and personnel of the bank, making the nature of the job mission changed. ...To write a history of the BOC is almost the same as writing about the position of the BOC in China's context of economic development which in terms of productivity and various formats of production, ideological construction and economic foundation, political policy and impact of policy implementation, operation of economy and management of economic mechanism. If we can solve the problems, then history will move forward. In short, the most important issues of the BOC after the establishment of the People's Republic can be concluded in three directions, namely policy, organization and structure, and legal governance...[Bu 1998:266–78]

According to Bu Ming, the most important thing to write a history of the BOC is 'periodization.' He divided the BOC's history before 1949 into four phases: 1) The provisional Nanjing government and Beiyang government, 1912–1928; 2) The Nanjing Republican government, 1928–1937; 3) The Sino-Japanese War, 1937–1945; and 4) The civil war, 1945–1949. Bu also divided the BOC history after 1949 into four phases: i) Economic recovery, 1949–1952; ii) Socialist transformation and reconstruction,

1953–1966; iii) Cultural Revolution, 1966–1979; and iv) Opening and economic reformation, 1979–1992. Bu’s approach is considered conservative because he concentrated on historical figures, events, and background. This approach is found in almost every type of the BOC history publications. Other than the history publications, the BOC has produced nine gazetteers, as listed in the table 2, and they all followed Bu’s model of “periodization.” Most of these gazetteers are not known to the public for they only served for “internal publication” (內部刊物), indicating that they are privately circulated. As shown in Table 1, Zhongguo Jinrong Chubanshe (中國金融出版社) has been commissioned to publish several items of the BOC’s history books, but these items have never been awarded for outstanding publications.<sup>6</sup> Nevertheless, they have been regarded as non-academic and the market for them is so limited.

So, what is the standard of a bank’s history? I do agree with Ma Yinchu 馬寅初 that as being an economic and business organization, the most effective and essential way for understanding how a bank functioned is to look at its business. Ma is an economist who studied at Columbia University and wrote a book *A Study in Chinese Banking* (中華銀行論), which was published in China in 1929 [Ma 1929]. Meanwhile, Ma’s point was echoed by an economic historian of Europe Abbott P. Usher. According to Usher [1943], bank, as an important institution to control business credit, is most able to reflect the structural change of commerce in Europe. In this connection, banking history is equivalent to economic history.

**Table 2: Gazetteers of BOC Published in the Last Twenty Years**

Year	Title
1989	<i>Gazetteer of BOC’s Baoding Branch, 1975–1995</i> (中國銀行保定分行志, 1975–1995) [Zhongguo Yinhang Baoding... 1989]
1990	<i>Gazetteer of Nankai Bank of Foreign Exchange</i> (南海縣外匯銀行志) [Zhongguo Yinhang Nanhai... 1990]
1991	<i>Gazetteer of BOC’s Beihai Branch, 1915–1990</i> (北海中國銀行志, 1915–1990) [Chen and Lin 1991]
	<i>Gazetteer of BOC’s Ningbo Branch, 1914–1987</i> (中國銀行寧波分行志, 1914–1987) [Zhongguo Yinhang Ningbo... 1991]
1993	<i>Gazetteer of BOC’s Jiangsu Branch</i> (江蘇中國銀行志) [Zhongguo Yinhang Jiangsusheng... 1993]
	<i>Records of Bank of China Wuzhou Branch</i> (梧州中國銀行志) [Wuzhou Zhongguo Yinhang 1993]
1995	<i>Gazetteer of BOC’s Henan Province Branch, 1975–1995</i> (中國銀行河南省分行志, 1975–1995) [Zhongguo Yinhang Henansheng... 1995]

1996	<i>Gazetteer of BOC's Xinchang Sub-branch, 1985-1996</i> (中國銀行新昌支行行志, 1985-1996) [Wang X. 1996]
2003	<i>Gazetteer of BOC's Gongzhuling Sub-branch</i> (中國銀行公主嶺支行行志) [Zhongguo Yinhang Gongzhuling... 2003]
2005	<i>Gazetteer of BOC's Shengzhou Sub-branch, 1984-2004</i> (中國銀行嵯州支行行志, 1984-2004) [Zhongguo Yinhang Shengzhou... 2005]
2009	<i>Gazetteer of BOC's Hebei Province Branch, 1976-2005</i> (中國銀行河北省分行志, 1976-2005) [Zhongguo Yinhang Hebeisheng... 2009]

As shown in the above tables, there are gaps and holes among these publications. For example, the status of BOC's predecessor the Daqing Government Bank, has long been a controversial issue. For instance, the historian Kong Xiangxian 孔祥賢 who participated in writing the BOC's history, has declared that there is no connection between the two banks. According to Kong [1986], the founding of the BOC in 1912 was not related to the Daqing Government Bank in terms of capitalization, the sources of funds, and the inheritance of debts and liability. However, Kong's view has not been adopted by all writers of the BOC history publications, though most of them supported the view that the BOC commenced business in 1912 instead of 1905 when the Qing government established the Bank of Revenue (戶部銀行), which later renamed as Daqing Government Bank. Nevertheless, scholars have not reached a consensus on the Daqing Government Bank's connection with the BOC.

It is worth to point out that in many of the BOC history publications, it is stated that the BOC is originated from the Daqing Government Bank, so the history between the two banks is not separated. For example,

On 24 January 1912, the United Association of Shareholders pledged the Nanjing provisional government to reorganize the Daqing Government Bank into the BOC by preserving the old capital of five million taels and at the meantime receiving a new capital from the business sector of another five million taels. Even the new capital have not been collected, a loan from the government can help to fulfill the subscription. Therefore, all the shares being held by the former government will be diminished. There will be a resolution office to handle the debts and liabilities left by the Daqing Bank. The reorganization will be processed by the inspectors which are appointed by the government. The Ministry of Finance has finally accepted this

proposal. It is stated in the permit which is approved by the president that: 1. The reorganization of the Daqing Bank into BOC doesn't cost time and money at all and the BOC can serve as a central bank to enforce China's economy; 2. Recognizing the capital contributed by merchants, exempting the loss of the business sector, and thereby helping the government to preserve creditability. As an administrative procedure, Wu Dingchang 吴鼎昌 and Xue Zhongying 薛頌瀛 have been appointed by the government as the Inspector and the Deputy Inspector respectively to follow up the matter. On 5 February 1912, the BOC commenced business at the same location of Daqing Government Bank in Shanghai.... [Zhongguo Yinhang Jinan Fenheng... 1986:15-16]

At the very beginning of the republic, Wu Dingchang, Ye Kuichu 葉揆初, and Song Hangzhang 宋漢章, who represented the shareholders of the business sector organized the United Association of Shareholders and pledged the government to reorganize the Daqing Government Bank into a new bank called the BOC, which served as the central bank of China. On 24 January 1912, the reorganization was approved by the provisional president Sun Yat-sen and the BOC commenced business on February 5 in Shanghai. [Zhang G. 1992:42]

My view is that the history of BOC shouldn't be divided according to political changes. If the history of the Daqing Bank is separated from the history of the BOC, then the northern expedition in 1928 and the establishment of the People's Republic in 1949 can also be separated from the history of the BOC. I think economic organization like the BOC should be independent from the changes in political regimes. Another prominent Chinese bank, the Bank of Communications, celebrated its centennial anniversary in 2008, indicating that the bank's history starting from 1908 though it was under the manipulation of Manchu government's Ministry of Communications and Transportation during that time. It is a convention that business organizations are preferred to have a longer history. Obviously, the BOC is an exception. It preferred to cut off its history with the Daqing Government Bank.

As for the standard of writing BOC history, I do not oppose Bu Ming's periodization but it is too restrictive, undermining the diversity, complexity, and inter-connectedness of the BOC's history.



#### IV. BANK ARCHIVES AND THE COMPILATION OF BANK'S HISTORICAL MATERIALS

As shown in Table 3, those publications can be regarded as “standard history,” which focused only on the structure of the bank organization, without covering business operation, finance and accounting, advertising, and daily life of employees. In addition, all documents written in non-Chinese language are all omitted.

**Table 3: Collection of Materials of BOC History**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Title</b>
1988	<i>Collection of Materials of BOC's Guangdong Branch, 1914–1949</i> (廣東中國銀行歷史資料匯編, 1914–1949) [Zhongguo Yinhang Guangzhou... 1988]
1991	<i>Collection of Materials of BOC's Guangdong Branch, 1949–1989</i> (廣東中國銀行歷史資料匯編, 1949–1989) [Zhongguo Yinhang Guangzhou... 1991]
	<i>Collection of Materials of BOC's Fujian Province Branch, 1914–1949</i> (中國銀行福建行史資料匯編, 1914–1949) [Zhongguo Yinhang Fujian... 1991]
	<i>A Collection of Materials on the History of Bank of China, part 1, 1912–1949</i> (中國銀行行史資料匯編上編, 1912–1949年) [Zhongguo Yinhang... and Zhongguo Dier Lishi Dang'anguan 1991]
1993	<i>Collection of Materials of Beijing Financial History, vol. 5, Bank of Communications &amp; BOC</i> (北京金融史料: 銀行篇第五冊 (交通銀行·中國銀行)) [Zhongguo Renmin Yinhang... and “Beijing jinrongzhi”... 1993]
1995	<i>Collection of Materials of BOC's Quanzhou Branch, 1916–1995</i> (中國銀行泉州市分行組織史資料, 1916–1995) [Zhongguo Yinhang Quanzhoushi... 1995]
1996	<i>Collection of Materials of BOC's Northeast Region, 1913–1948</i> (中國銀行東北地區行史資料匯編, 1913–1948) [Zhongguo Yinhang Liaoningsheng... 1996]
1999	<i>Collection of Materials of BOC's Xiamen Branch</i> (中國銀行廈門市分行行史資料彙編) [Zhongguo Yinhang Xiamenshi... 1999]

Given that the BOC was the biggest bank in Republican China, it played the role of central bank and the specialized bank in foreign exchange. These features are not reflected in these publications.

It often said that history cannot be separated from archives, so I am

interested how the BOC complied their archives used these archives in their history publications. The answers are disappointing too. Due to the fact that BOC's branches spanned over all the country including Hong Kong and Taiwan,<sup>7</sup> it is probable that the archives were housed in various locations. In 1950, the BOC was merged with the People's Bank of China. It is estimated that there are forty thousand volumes of BOC archives left in the People's Bank [Anon. 1991:123]. In fact, the items listed in Table 3, constituted only a part of the BOC's historical materials. Anyway, the materials about the BOC are various. Other than the bank's archives, the BOC has been engaged in various researches of Chinese economy and finance and its research department had published a large number of investigation reports. These investigation reports are valuable to the study of Chinese economic history.<sup>8</sup>

In 1992 when the BOC celebrated its eightieth anniversary, it was announced that the BOC will join with the Second Historical Archives of China to produce the following materials: 1) Biography of BOC's historical figures (中國銀行歷史名人傳); 2) Photo album of BOC history (中國銀行行史圖片集); 3) Historical materials of the change of BOC's capitalization (中國銀行股本變化史料); 4) Historical materials of BOC's operation and management of business (中國銀行各項業務管理制度辦法及具體實施情況史料); 5) Historical materials of BOC's board meetings (中國銀行董監事會行務會及股東會議史料); 6) Historical materials of the change of BOC's organization (中國銀行組織機構變化史料); 7) Selected historical archives and materials of BOC's issued bonds and banknotes (中國銀行發行公債鈔票檔案史料選編); 8) Manuals of BOC's employees (中國銀行行員手冊). If published, these publications would have more than 2.3 million words [Song Q. 2002:63]. Unfortunately, more than ten years later, none of these projects has been completed [Liu S. 2007:62-64].

## V. THE RESEARCH ON THE BOC HISTORY

As shown in the list of bibliography IV of this paper, it is not until the 1960's historian began to pay attention to the history of the BOC. A retired staff named Yao Songling 姚崧齡 [1968] wrote a recollection of his service in the BOC. Later, Yao compiled the chronology of one of the BOC's earliest managers Zhang Jiao 張嘉璈 and it is published in the 1980's [Yao S. 1982]. Nevertheless, Yao was not a historian by training. It is worth to mention that the research of the BOC's history started from the collection of data of the BOC's personnel or important events [Ajia Keizai Kenkyūjo 1986; Imura and Yamamoto 1995]. Quite a number of

biographies are published from the 1980's, including the ones on Zhang Jiao [Chang 1989; Ihara 2012], Bian Baimei 卞白眉 [2008], Song Hanzhang 宋漢章 [Sun 2011]. Others included Song Ziwen 宋子文, Shu Yunzhang 束雲章 [Zhu P. 1992; Jiangsusheng... and Danyangshi... 1994], and Liu Xianshi 劉顯世. These figures aroused most attention because of their close relationship with the Republican government. Fortunately, these biographies are written by historians.

It was not until the early 1980's that PhD dissertations were written on the history of the BOC [Waldman 1984]. These dissertations not only focused on mainland China [Tan 2004; Dong 2005; Lin W. 2009], but also on the US [Waldman 1984; Sheehan 1997; Mickey 2004] and Taiwan [Mao 1994; Xie 2001; Xu 2006]. As listed in the bibliography V, the topics of these theses are quite diverse, not just focusing on historical figures but also covered on state-business relations [Sheehan 1997], corporate governance and management [Tan 2004], branch networks [Lin W. 2009], and so on.

In regard of journal articles, the BOC history has been the most popular topic as compared with other banks such as Bank of Communications and Kincheng Bank, of both of the academic world in China or in the international (see the bibliography IV). However, the number of articles varies. By and large, China has produced a large number of articles since the 1940s. Following China are Taiwan, Japan, and the US. Among these articles, the majority of them are historical figures. Others touch on 1916 moratorium, business and management, Sino-Japanese diplomacy, relationship with Republican government, also aroused attention. Nevertheless, little attention has been paid to the Daqing Government Bank.

Overall, one can say that the BOC has been completely isolated from the academic world because of its practice of publishing low quality and non-professional historical accounts. Obviously, there are gaps between the two groups of persons who wrote the BOC's history. It is regrettable that the efforts of the BOC on publishing its own history, has been unproductive when its publications are ignored by the scholarly world.

## VI. CONCLUDING REMARKS

Starting from the year 1931 when BOC compiled its chronology (中國銀行大事記), the BOC has had the tradition of writing its own history for about eighty-three years. Due to political chaos and social movements in China, the archives of the BOC cannot be well preserved, creating difficulty to historians to write an empirically based history of the BOC.

However, it doesn't mean that this problem cannot be solved. Starting from the year of 1986, the BOC has been continuously produced different types of its history including history books, gazetteers, and collection of historical materials. It has to be emphasized that these publications which are produced in different time, do not have standard format. For example, the history of the Daqing Government Bank shouldn't be separated from the BOC.

Honestly, writing the BOC's history is a contribution to academic world, but the current standard for the in-house production does not reflect the real picture of the BOC's past. The approach of writing or compiling the BOC history should be changed according to the needs of the society, and the communication with the academic world is prerequisite. It can be anticipated those "in-house" or "official" history publications produced by the BOC will not be survived in the market as they are failed to reflect the real picture of BOC's past. We have to start from the beginning the concept of BOC's history.

—Originally written in Chinese

## NOTES

- 1 The earlier version of this paper was published in Chinese [Lee P. 2013]. This paper has been presented at the 508th Research Meetings on Economic History, organized by the Faculty of Economics, the University of Tokyo, on 28 October 2013. The author wishes to express his gratitude to Leslie Hannah, Kasuya Makoto 粕谷誠, Kuroda Akinobu 黒田明伸, and Tanimoto Masayuki 谷本雅之, who have provided comments and suggestions for publishing the paper.
- 2 The discipline of business history (企業史) in China is still under-developed. Please refer to the two articles written by Chinese scholars who voiced out on this issue: Wang Chuhui 1998; Wang Jintang 1996.
- 3 This estimation is based on the number of publications by both the company themselves and by the academic presses, please refer to Kanemaru [2008:6–24].
- 4 As quoted by Wang Chuanlun [1996], "All the twenty editorial committee members are old hands (老銀行), who have been in charge of some specified departments or specialized in certain businesses. At the meantime, many of them are engaged in the writing of the bank history."
- 5 It has been said that the HSBC is currently preparing to celebrate its 150th anniversary in 2015. As an end-product of the celebration, the volume five of the HSBC History (1985–2015) is under processing.
- 6 See the list of the awarded publications (1985–2005) of the Zhongguo

- Jinrong Chubanshe (中國金融出版社1985年–2005年獲獎圖書一覽表) [Lin T. 2006:122].
- 7 In 1971, the relocated BOC in Taiwan was renamed as International Commercial Bank of China (中國國際商業銀行). In 2006, it merged with Bank of Communications and formed Mega International Commercial Bank (兆豐國際商業銀行).
  - 8 As collected by the author, the regular publications at least have following five items: 1) *Bank of China Monthly Review* (中行月刊), vol. 1, no. 1 (July 1930)–vol. 17, nos. 5-6 (Nov/Dec 1938); 2) *Life at the BOC* (中行生活) (Shanghai: BOC Headquarters, 1932); 3) *Reports of Finance in China and in Abroad* (中外商業金融彙報) (Shanghai: BOC Headquarters Economic Research Office, Feb 1934–Jan 1939); 4) *Monthly Financial Statistics* (金融統計月報) (Shanghai: BOC Headquarters Research Department, irregular date); 5) *Special Report of Commerce and Finance* (中外商業金融專報) (Shanghai: BOC Headquarters Economic Research Office, irregular date). And the regular publications included the following eleven items: 1) *Research Report of Northeastern China Economy* (東三省經濟調查錄) [Zhongguo Yinhang Zongguanlichu 1919]; 2) *Collective Papers of China's Domestic Bonds* (內國公債彙覽) [Zhongguo Yinhang Zongsiku n.d.]; 3) *An Analysis of the Accounts of the Principal Chinese Banks, 1932* (民國二十一年度中國重要銀行營業概況研究) [Zhongguo Yinhang Zongguanlichu... 1933a]; 4) *An Analysis of the Accounts of the Principal Chinese Banks, 1921–31* (中國重要銀行最近十年營業概況研究) [Zhongguo Yinhang Zongguanlichu... 1933b]; 5) *An Analysis of Shanghai Commodity Price 1923–1932* (中國最近物價統計圖表) [Zhongguo Yinhang Zongguanlichu... 1933c]; 6) *A Brief History of Financial Crises in Szechuen* (四川金融風潮史畧) [Chongqing Zhongguo Yinhang 1933]; 7) *Economic Conditions in Chunking: 1922–1932* (重慶經濟概況：民國十一年至二十年) [Chongqing Zhongguo Yinhang 1934]; 8) *Almanac of All Banks in China* (全國銀行年鑑) [Zhongguo Yinhang Zongguanlichu... 1934a]; 9) *Illustration of External Trade of China, 1930–1933* (民國十九年至二十二年中國對外貿易統計圖解) [Zhongguo Yinhang Zongguanlichu... 1934b]; 10) *Chinese Government Foreign Loan Obligations, 1935* (中國外債彙編：民國二十四年) [Zhongguo Yinhang Zongguanlichu... 1935]; 11) *A Preliminary Statistics of China's Foreign Exchange* (外匯統計彙編初集) [Zhongguo Yinhang Zongguanlichu 1950].

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